

COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET
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Statement by U. S. Representative
Jim McDermott

On the
Revised Draft Hanford Solid Waste Program
Environmental Impact Statement

May 15, 2003

1 For more than 60 years our federal government has used our state as the dumping grounds for nuclear waste. For years we were assured there would be little risk of endangerment of human health or the environment. Science, time, and common sense have demonstrated this to be at best a misrepresentation – at worst blatant lies. Much of the contamination occurred while the Department of Energy (DOE) claimed exemption from independent external environmental regulation. Finally, in 1989, the DOE entered into an agreement with our state and the tribal nations and the Environmental Protection Agency to clean up the hazards. This agreement has repeatedly been violated by the DOE.

Less than a year ago I provided comments on an inadequate draft of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to designate Hanford as a national radioactive waste dump. We were being asked to believe that the DOE would correct its neglect in cleaning up the existing toxic conditions – in exchange for doubling the nuclear waste it would dump at the site. Once again the public was assured of minimal risk of endangerment to human health or the environment.

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1 | Tonight we are being asked to comment on a revised draft of last year's EIS. We are being asked to accept the promises, commitments, and projections of an agency backed by a history of years of malfeasance. Further, the revised draft leaves many issues unaddressed. Among the issues left open:

2 | Transportation risks

3 | Lack of a timeline to cease burial in unlined trenches

4 | Failure to inventory and classify existing wastes

5 | Lack of adequate groundwater monitoring

6 | Full discussion of alternative methods of disposal

7 | Failure to address options for source reduction by aggressively pursuing non-nuclear alternatives

8 | To this we add the current Administration's reprioritization of the DOE's budget for increased funding for nuclear programs that will generate more waste, and its proposal to make military use of nuclear energy exempt from environmental regulation. All this in the face of growing federal deficit spending and a skyrocketing national debt that threatens the historically inadequate levels of funding for clean up of this site.

Until the DOE addresses these issues in good faith, it is disingenuous to ask the residents of this state and the tribal nations to place their health in jeopardy and risk the contamination of their homelands to placate a corporate nuclear industry that has foisted the burden of responsibility on to American taxpayers.

9 | I continue to stand in opposition to this plan to import increased
10 | nuclear waste at Hanford. I call for immediate action to clean up the existing contamination and to aggressively pursue source reduction alternatives to our nuclear waste quagmire.

Dane Spencer 4160 Crystal Springs Bainbridge Island, WA 98110 (206) 842-9044

Statement to the Department of Energy

Let me see if I have this right. I'm a little confused about all of this nuclear waste and I want to see if this makes sense to you, because it doesn't make sense to me.

- 1.) In 1945 U.S. citizens paid taxes for the Manhattan Project, -a project we knew nothing about- that resulted in producing nuclear waste, as well as the two bombs that were dropped on Japan.
- 2.) Less than one year after the bombing of Japan we created and detonated another atomic bomb that continued to spread fallout, spending U.S. citizens taxpayer money, -again without our knowledge, or permission.
- 3.) The Atomic Energy Commission, which is now the Department of Energy, continued to create and detonate atomic bombs spending U.S. citizen taxpayer money, -again with out our knowledge- continuing to contaminate every man woman and child in the United States, and parts of Canada, and Mexico with fallout while accumulating large amounts of radioactive waste in various parts of this country.
- 4.) The AEC/Department of Energy, in fact, from 1945 to 1962 detonated over 1000 atomic and nuclear bombs, many above ground contributing to at least 20,000 deaths of U.S. citizens from thyroid cancer according to figures released by the United States Center for Disease Control. In other words, the AEC/Department of Energy killed U.S. citizens using U.S. taxpayer money, and did so ostensibly without our knowledge. Additionally, the production of these atomic and nuclear weapons created huge amounts of nuclear waste that has never been clean-up or taken care of.
- 1 5.) The DOE wants to transport 70,000 shipments of nuclear waste in a steady stream on our roads, railways, and shipping lanes, to the Hanford Nuclear Reservation with U.S. taxpayer money, mostly without out our collective knowledge and definitely without our permission. This steady steam of nuclear waste will be in transit on our highways and railways for several generations.
- 2 6.) The DOE is using the legal system to leverage its enormous power against the democratically elected government of the State of Washington, -with U.S. citizen taxpayer money- to slow down, -no, to halt the U.S. taxpayer funded nuclear waste clean-up in the State of Washington, South Carolina, and Nevada just to name a few.
- 7.) The DOE, with U.S. citizen taxpayer money, is threatening to sue the State of Washington, -which will have to use U.S. citizen taxpayer money to legally defend itself from the DOE's lack of commitment to clean up the nuclear waste that the AEC/DOE created over the last 58 years.

L-0020 (contd)

8.) The DOE wants to reinstate nuclear testing of nuclear bunker busters and mini nukes at the Nevada Test Site which will create more radioactive fallout across the country, and will continue to create nuclear waste that will need shipping somewhere, probably Hanford, funded with U.S. citizen taxpayer money, again without our permission.

3

9.) The DOE has no intention of EVER cleaning up Hanford, the Nevada Test Site, Rocky Flatts, North Carolina, etc., etc., and in fact, wants to expand the production of nuclear waste through the continued production of nuclear bombs and nuclear reactors, funded with U.S. citizen taxpayer money, -again ostensibly with out our collective knowledge and without our permission.

4

10.) For 58 years from 1945 to the present, the DOE has funded the manufacturing of radioactive nuclear waste with U.S. citizen taxpayer money, without our collective knowledge or our permission, and is responsible for past and future deaths of U.S. citizens resulting from radioactive contamination from its waste sites and its facilities.

No, I've looked at this every way I can, and it still doesn't make sense.

This is outrageous! Take a good look in the mirror and tell me you like what you see. Tell me your doing this for the good of the country.

5

I will settle for nothing less than the complete halt of the manufacturing of radioactive nuclear waste, and the immediate clean-up of the DOE's deplorable legacy has left our children to contend with. The people of this country will not stand for this type of irresponsible behavior.

Sincerely,

Dane Spencer

Good evening. My name is Becky Stanley and I'm a botanist, and an activist with the Sierra Club Cascade Chapter.

The Columbia River supported 16 million salmon annually in the time when Lewis and Clark traveled thru our region just 200 years ago. The Hanford Reach of the Columbia River, now the Hanford National Monument, supports the largest wild salmon population left in the northwest.

1 But, the Hanford nuclear reservation is the most contaminated site in the western world. For 60 years, in the name of progress and national security, millions of cubic meters of radioactive materials have accumulated at Hanford, and 440 billion gallons of liquid waste were dumped into the soil. Toxic chemicals inch towards the mighty Columbia River – which could become a highway to distribute plutonium, uranium and other hazardous chemicals throughout the Columbia Basin.

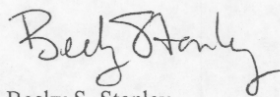
2 The Hanford waste is a ticking time bomb. But, instead of trying to diffuse this threat by cleaning up waste and preventing more coming our way, the Bush Administration is going the opposite direction: threatening to stop clean up measures and planning to add 70,000 truckloads of radioactive and chemical waste to this area.

3 And what effect would that have on the region? Without an adequate EIS, we honestly don't know. The Department of Energy needs to fully disclose potential impacts on the Columbia River and the fishery. It needs to determine the baseline data, and have monitoring in place before any more waste is brought in. Before we can know the total impact of adding more, USDOE must disclose the impacts from the burial grounds and other wastes already in the soil.

4 However, based on past performance, we are skeptical about their ability to protect our precious water and fish resources. There are 1,400 waste sites at Hanford, typified by rusty barrels and unlined trenches. It would be illegal for me to store my household garbage in such a manner, yet the Department of Energy continually ignores the law and stores extremely radioactive wastes directly on the ground. Already, an estimated one million gallons of high-level radioactive waste have leaked into the soil. Plumes of contaminants have reached the groundwater. Since USDOE will not voluntarily even consider stopping its dumping of waste in unlined soil trenches this year, we are pleased that Representative Inslee and others are introducing legislation to accomplish this long overdue compliance with basic standards.

6 & 7 Radioactive and chemical waste has not and will not stay inside Hanford's boundaries. It's time to stop playing politics with our future: stop importing waste into Hanford and clean up the mess that already threatens our human, river and wildlife health. Washingtonians don't want our state to become a national radioactive waste dump.

Sincerely,



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L-0022

This document was submitted twice by the addressee.
See L-0014 for the original letter that was submitted.

L-0023

May 13th 200

Dear Micheal Collins

1 | I am very concerned about more
waste being taken to Hanford. We can't
handle the waste that we have now and we
already have 43 of the Nations waste.

Please Stop Further explortation
of Nuclear Waste from being brought
to Hanford.

Thank you

Cristi Bove